

Single Stream Recycling in Cambridge

City Council Roundtable Discussion
May 17, 2010



Agenda

- History of Recycling in Cambridge
- Current Recycling Program
- What is Single Stream?
- Focus on High Quality
- Materials to Recycle
- New Trucks & Role of Supervisor
- Toters are Easy & Convenient
- Single Stream Makes Recycling Cleaner
- Recycling Rate
- Outreach Strategy for Single Stream

History of Curbside Recycling

1989

Citizen volunteers operated a monthly Recycling Drop-off Center

1991

- Mandatory Recycling Ordinance
- City implements Curbside Recycling
- Permanent Recycling Drop-off Center
- Hired first Recycling Coordinator, Jan Aceti
- Materials include glass, metal and plastic containers (#1 & #2) and newspaper
- More materials added over time



Cambridge Recycling Program Today

18-gallon Bins

Residences
with less than
6 units



95 Gallon Toters

Residences with 6 units or more and City
buildings

65 Gallon Toters

Some 1-5 unit residences have for
paper/cardboard

Current Recycling Trucks



Non compacting trucks

2 compartments to keep papers and containers separate

Bins emptied into side bucket

Toters attached to bucket and dumped overhead



What is Single Stream?

No More Sorting in One Big Toter!

Mix fibers and containers together for collection and processing. FY11 Budget includes proposal to begin in Cambridge September 20th.

National Trend

Communities:

Increased tonnage and reduced solid waste costs

Processors:

Drastic improvements in sorting technology

Haulers:

More efficient collection with compacting trucks

Started in Boston, Newton, San Francisco,
Toronto, Denver, Philadelphia.... And more!



The City's processor,
[Casella Recycling](#) invested
8 million into cutting edge
sorting technology:



- Goals: Safety, Quality, then Productivity
- Presort and quality control checks where employees remove unacceptable items
- Sorting technology removes glass at 5 different points
- Material is re-circulated continually to ensure a quality sort and maximum recovery

Papers to Recycle in the Current Program



Paper & Cardboard

- **Cardboard**
(flat, no larger than 3'x3')
- **Magazines & Newspapers**
- **Phone Books & Junk Mail**
- **Cereal Boxes, Paper Towel Rolls**
- **Milk / Juice Cartons**
- **Soft Cover Books**
- **All Office Paper**
- **Shredded Paper**
(in a stapled & labeled paper bag)

New Materials Accepted in Single Stream!



Cardboard any size



Empty



- **Cardboard** (any size)
- **Pizza boxes** (empty)
- **Books** (rip off hard covers)
- **Frozen food boxes**
- **Spiral cans** (potato chip, nut cans)
- **Shredded Paper** (in a plastic bag)

Containers to Recycle in the Current Program



Bottles & Cans

- **Aluminum**
(pie plates, trays & foil)
- **Empty Aerosol Cans**
(no spray paint or oil)
- **Glass Bottles & Jars** (any color)
- **Metal Cans**
(tin, steel & aluminum)
- **Stiff Plastic Containers**
(marked #1-7, plant pots OK)
- NO STYROFOAM
- NO PLASTIC BAGS

New Materials Accepted in Single Stream!



Toters Make Recycling Easy & Convenient



| Residence | Toters City will Deliver |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Single Family | 1 Small |
| Two Family | 2 Small |
| Triple Decker | 2 Large |
| 4 Unit Building | 2 Large |
| 5 Unit Building | 2 Large |

- No more sorting
- All in one bin
- Bigger container
- Less lifting
- Easy to move
- If space is a problem...
 - We might offer storage ideas
 - Share toters with a neighbor
 - Convert a trash can for recycling
 - Continue using blue bins

Single Stream Makes Recycling Cleaner

- Less litter!
 - Toters are covered
 - Less overflow because bigger container
 - No more over-the-top, rear & side load compaction
 - Less material affected on windy days
- Cleaner looking curbside
 - More uniform with toters
 - Less bin clutter on sidewalks



New and Improved Recycling Trucks

Compacting design holds more

Reduces trips to facility

Safer because trucks tips totes at ground level

Same overhead clearance as trash trucks, no more

Cardboard, any size!

Safer: totes tipped at ground level & reduced worker injury



Recycling Field Supervisor

New contract will require supervisor to be in separate vehicle to ensure drivers maintain reliable performance by drivers:

- Safe driving
- Proper handling and replacement recycling containers
- Anything dropped is cleaned up
- Missed pickups reliably completed



Recycling Rate

$$\frac{\text{RECYCLING TONS}}{\text{TOTAL TRASH} + \text{RECYCLING} + \text{TONS}}$$

City has seen a steady rate around 35% for many years

With single stream City expects 10-25% increase in recycling tons

- Not a full year with 9/20/10 start date
- 800-2000 more curbside recycling tons
- With 800 tons more recycling, 40% rate

About the Recycling Rate...

- Includes residences and city buildings
- All curbside and drop-off recycling
- Add estimate tons for households with private trash service



Single Stream Outreach Strategy

Print Materials

- Postcard to 1-5 units regarding toter delivery (demo toters in City buildings)
- Postcard to all households regarding program start
- Full brochure to all households
- Poster for city buildings and community boards
- “Door hanger” to attach to toters during delivery

Community Outreach

- Presentations to neighborhood groups, houses of worship, schools, etc.
- Tabling at festivals
- Website, email newsletters, Cable, press releases
- And more!

